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4801 N. 9th Street  
Arlington, VA 22203

August 18, 1999

Food and Drug Administration  
Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)  
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061  
Rockville, MD 20852

Re: **Docket numbers 98N-1230; 96P-0418; 97P-0197**

Sirs:

As a private citizen taking a moment to write, I am sure that my voice represents the opinion of countless other Americans who care about the safety of their food supply. I write to ask that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) ban the practice of forced molting in the egg industry.

Each year the United States egg industry force molts millions of hens in an effort to manipulate (*and increase*) egg production. However, forced molting is so stressful it weakens and destroys the hens' immune system, predisposing the birds and their eggs to salmonella poison. The Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service has even recognized that the extended starvation and water deprivation practices associated with forced molting lead to increased shedding of salmonella. I was disgusted and horrified to learn about forced molting.

The FDA has jurisdiction to ban farm practices that endanger human health. I believe the FDA needs to ban outright the practice of forced molting since it has been scientifically shown to promote disease. Forced molting of laying hens is the primary cause of infectious diseases in hens, of diseases in their eggs — and, yes, a cause of infectious diseases in consumers of eggs.

**The FDA was petitioned in April 1998 to ban forced molting. This petition should be granted without further delay.** Putting bacteria warning labels on egg cartons and regulating refrigeration temperatures is not enough to ensure human health and safety.

Sincerely,



Sarah Richter

96P-0418

C337

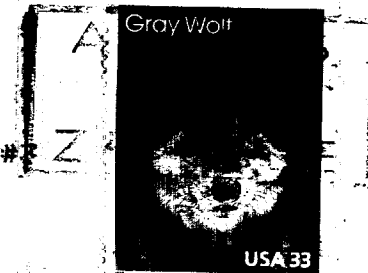


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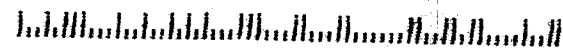
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CROSS FILE SHEET

File Number:

98N-1230/ C337

See File Number:

97P-0197/ C338

96P-0418/ C337